

(c) the items being imported and exported from these countries and the latest balance of payment position ;

(d) whether the Government have made a trade protocol with Israel also ; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the items proposed to be imported / exported ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Protocols and Agreements providing for trade in non - convertible Indian rupees are in force with Czechoslovakia, Romania, Uzbekistan and Russia.

(b) Trade with the rupee payment countries is governed by the provisions of the Import and Export policy as amended from time to time.

(c) In case of Czechoslovakia and Romania, the trade, at present is in India's favour. Items of export to rupee payment countries include agricultural products, minerals and ores, chemicals and allied products, leather and leather manufactures, engineering goods etc., and those of import include machinery equipment fertilizers, crude oil and petroleum products, non - ferrous metals etc.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Involvement of HMT Officials in Smuggling and duty evasion cases

4888. SHRI J. CHOKKA RAO
SHRI SANAT KUMAR
MANDAL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether several officials of HMT

have been found involved in smuggling and evasion of customs duty worth crores of rupees as reported in the Business standard, Calcutta, dated January 25, 1992.

(b) If so, the details thereof alongwith the details of the persons involved there in ; and

(c) The action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) and (c). Customs authorities gathered intelligence that HMT were procuring their imported requirements through SSI Units eligible for concessional rates of imported goods through Front / Non- Existent firms. Hence, searches were conducted by Customs authorities in different Units of HMT Limited, and in all, six cases were registered against HMT watch Factories Goods totally valued Rs. 5.78 crores were also sized. In all the cases, show cause notices have been issued to the company and on certain officers of HMT Limited for their involvement in these cases. The persons involved are as under :

1. Shri Raju, General Manager, HMT Ltd , Tumkur, Karnataka .

2. Shri J.S.Prakash, Assistant General Manager, HMT Ltd, Tumkoor, Karnataka.

3. Dr. M.R. Naidu, Former Chairman and Managing Director, HMT Ltd.

4. Shri K.S. Gergan, Director (Watches) , HMT Ltd.

5. Shri M. Jagannath, General Manager, Watch Marketing, HMT Ltd.

6. Shri H. V. Lalit Kumar, Former General Manager, HMT, Rani Bah.